

WEST HARTFORD SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes

September 22, 2015

Members present: Noreen Bachteler, Linda Hanson, Ruth Kurien, Connie Melo, Ellen Phillips, Donna Sterling and Philip Walker
Members Absent: Ray Guenter, Robert Kennedy
Staff present: Kathleen Faroni, Susan Huleatt, Gina Marino
Guests: Kevin Farmer, Jaime Krajewski, Rep. Joseph Verrengia
Volunteer Secretary: Amy Lynn Silverman

Chairman Phillip Walker called the meeting to order at 10:33AM.

The Minutes of June 16, 2015 were approved unanimously.

Chairman Walker welcomed Rep. Joe Verrengia, Kevin Farmer, Executive Director of ITNCentral, and Jaime Krajewski, the new facilities manager of the Elmwood Community Center.

Jaime Krajewski spoke about her background and that she stresses “partnership” in her work.

Chairman’s Report

Chairman Phil Walker announced to the Commission that Susan Huleatt is retiring and offered appreciation for all the work that she has done on behalf of the Commission. He also noted that the AARP CT Chapter had recognized Jim Doran with the 2015 State Andrus Award for Community Service.

Phil spoke about the importance of the reports of Kathleen Faroni and Gina Marino to the work of the Commission. Last spring the Commission asked for written reports that could be simply bullet points that highlight the significant issues. He invited Helen Rubino-Turco to attend the November Commission meeting.

Next month Danielle Herbert who is the Way to Go CT Regional Mobility Manager/ Ombudsman will be the guest speaker.

Representative Joseph Verrengia

Rep. Verrengia, who retired after 25 years with the West Hartford Police, spoke about his work at the Legislative. He serves on the transportation, budget and finance committees. He discussed the issues for seniors and for West Hartford and the laws that were passed this last session. Among them are neglect and abuse of seniors, transportation projects, state aide to towns, capping of the car tax mil rate, non-profits with real estate paying tax, military veterans’ 100% exemption, protection of the elderly, Medicare coverage of OTC drugs expansion, the Care Act (see attachment), and EMT’s becoming mandatory reporters. He also spoke about the Elmwood Bridge, the S curves at the Park Rd exit from I84, the Bus Way; Public Safety including body cameras for police; Casino expansion; Judiciary – the Governor’s 2nd Chance Society and overhaul of the corrections system. There is a great concern about the Medicaid cuts which also effect Federal dollars.

Transportation

Kevin Farmer reported for ITNCentral that the rides provided have passed 10,000. There are 21 active drivers, up from 9, although more are needed. The service covers 15 towns for about 100 riders, of who 30-40 are very active. One of the current goals is to add more Board member with

particular emphasis on diversity, especially in the area of skill sets. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has given the organization a grant to develop a strategic plan. There are goals of expanding, adding volunteers and increasing the number of donors from the current 50. The Board has 3 committees: Development, Finance, and Volunteers. The Commission members commended the Board and Kevin for their work.

Senior Job Bank

Jim Doran emailed this report. The SJB is proceeding with a strategic/succession plan using an outside facilitator. The Board is actively seeking a second minority Board member. The 12 month "need help" requests were 959 for the 12 months ended in August. This number does not include those who used a service provider a second or third time without again contacting SJB. The estimate of this # is at least an additional 300 work requests. A broker's account has been established with Peoples' Bank for funds in excess of 4 month's cash needs.

Human Services Report

Susan Huleatt received a round of applause for her work for the Town and with the Commission. There is a Farewell to Susan on Tuesday, Sept. 29th from 12:30 to 2 at Town Hall. Susan shared the latest Human Services report for the Town, and the most recent Benefit Sheet (attached). She met with the staff of 10 other towns for a workshop on Protective Services for the Elderly. The Rental Rebate program is winding up and Energy Assistance is starting.

Town Council

No report.

Senior Centers

Written reports accompany these Minutes.

New Business

Ellen Phillips drafted a letter to Mayor Slifka regarding the parking at the Elmwood Community Center. She spoke to John Phillips from Public Works. Phil Walker asked the members to review the letter (attached) and think about possible solutions. He asked Ellen to invite John to the November meeting.

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, October 20th at 10am.

The meeting adjourned at 12:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Lynn Silverman
Volunteer Secretary